

Environmental Justice an Important Part of the West Lake Team

The Environmental Justice program at EPA Region 7 is an important part of the West Lake team. Environmental Justice (EJ) is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Karim Dawani is EPA Region 7's Environmental Justice representative for the West Lake site.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of EPA's Environmental Justice program. Environmental justice is a goal for all communities and persons across this Nation. It will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.

Meet Karim Dawani

Karim Dawani joined EPA Region 7 in 2010 as a Program Analyst and Grants Manager. Currently he serves as an Environmental Justice Outreach Coordinator. At the West Lake landfill site, Karim works to ensure that the diverse communities affected by the site are treated equally by the Agency. Among his other responsibilities, Karim also promotes Healthy Homes, lead safety, and other topics relevant to communities in Region 7.

Karim is a veteran of the United States Army, serving four years from 1996 to 2000.

EPA Completes Radiation Screening at BMAC

Radiation experts from EPA Region 7 and Region 5 worked from morning to night the week of May 19 to quickly complete a comprehensive radiation screening of the Bridgeton Municipal Athletic Complex (BMAC). Combining a GPS-linked radiation detector with soil samples, this screening will provide the community with the definitive, scientifically-backed results to better understand the conditions at BMAC.

The EPA screening of the 70-acre park collected data from 60,000 points along 45 miles of transecting lines. Three field survey teams worked in concert transecting the entire complex. Using global positioning systems and detection instruments, the teams screened for gamma radiation and also collected more than 100 soil samples for laboratory testing for thorium, radium and uranium.

The teams also worked together with the citizen group which conducted its own sampling to identify those locations visually and with GPS coordinates in order to collect additional samples from those locations.

The teams also conducted background reference screening and soil sampling at two parks (Blanchette and Koch), which are located about four miles from BMAC. These background levels are important because radiation occurs naturally in our environment. The background levels will serve as benchmarks for comparing the radiation levels at BMAC to determine if any readings there would be considered above background level that would be expected in that geographic area.

The soil samples and preliminary screening results are currently undergoing an extensive quality control, quality assurance procedure to ensure the validity of the data. Once the quality control review is

complete, EPA will make the results available to the public on its website and via social and traditional media.

At this time, EPA reiterates its previously stated position that the ball fields remain suitable for use and encourages the community to continue to enjoy the facilities at BMAC.